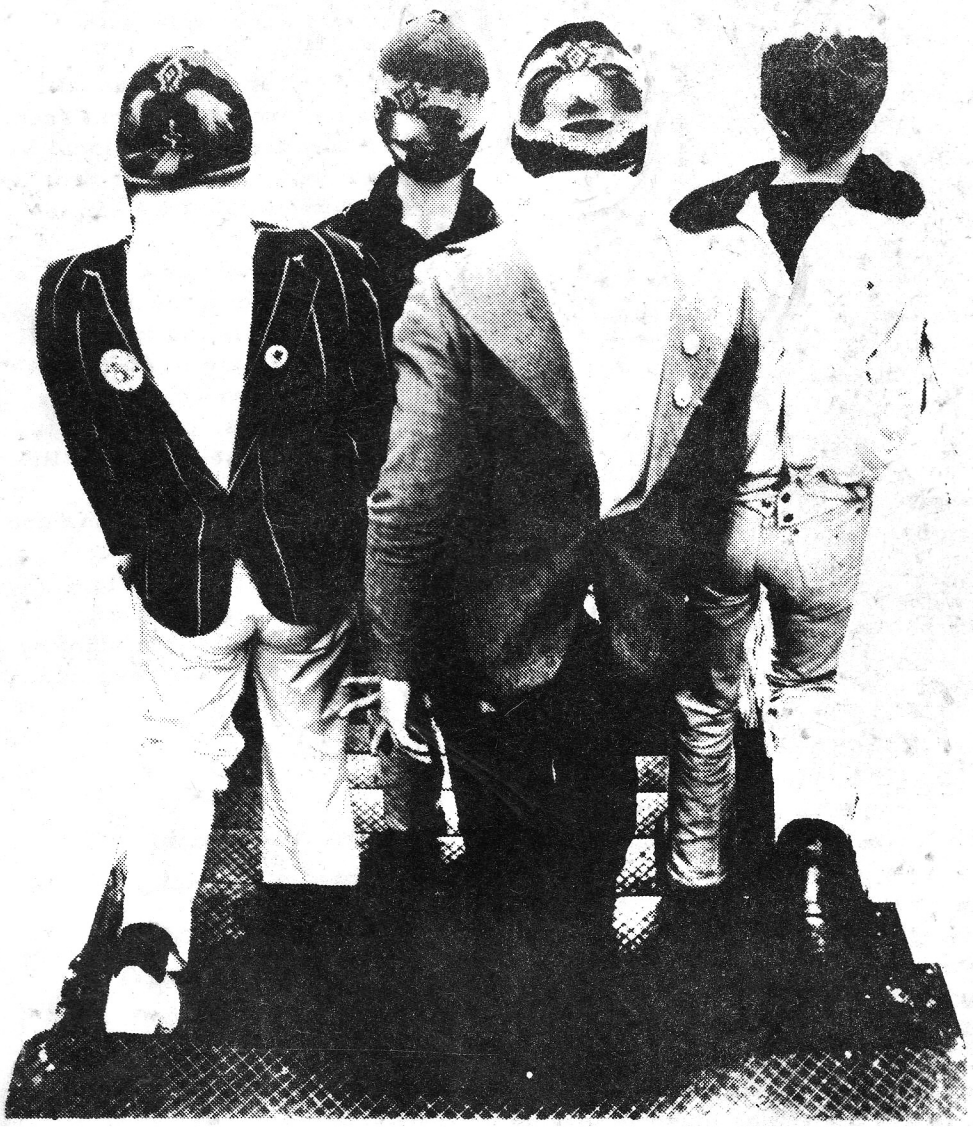
HELTER SKELTER

NO 1 35p



Nick Lowe Punilux

Anti-Pop

Editorial

Issue No. 1.

The city of Newcastle, currently celbrating its 900th year, has a list of traditions as long as your arm but, unfortunately, producing nationally recognised rock'n'roll bands isn't one of them. The reasons for this sad state of affairs are many and varied but, certainly, no argument could be put forward on the grounds that there is a lack of talent in the area, or even a lack of interest in music; it would appear to be more of a lack of organisation amongst people directly involved locally, and also a severe lack of recognised venues where new/unestablished bands could gain vital exposure and experience.

One of the prime aims of this magazine is for it to act as a means of exposure for local bands who we consider worthy of attention and also to cover bands from other areas who are on tour in the region. 'Famous' bands will also appear from time to time, but this is tied up with availability for interviews and co-operation from national booking agencies. Certainly, if a major band are playing in the area, we will make every effort to cover their gig.

This first issue features an article on one of the most promising organisations to emerge in the north for the last few years, Arthur 2-Stroke's 'Anti-Pop', and included is an interview with the Noise Toys guitarist, Rupert.

Punishment Of Luxury and Hot Snax are also to be found in these pages, as are reviews of Elvis Costello and Sad Cafe's recent local appearances. Recently released albums and singles are als to be found, also a 'Looking Back' feature which considers Nick Lowe's early work with Brinsley Schwartz.

Hopefully, our next issue will have much more on the local scene in it, so why don't all you local bands send us a copy of a tape or drop us a line and we'll do all we can to give you exposure.

Another thing we could use is the involvement of a few more contributors, so if you feel that you could contribute in ANY way at all - be it either writing articles, taking photographs, or helping with layout - please drop us a line or give us a call.

Well, that's about it for this one except to give a big thanks to everyone who helped at a time when it was most needed, including Spike at Stiff, Bri for the printing and Chris and Gym for the cartoon.

See you soon

Mal Armstrong.

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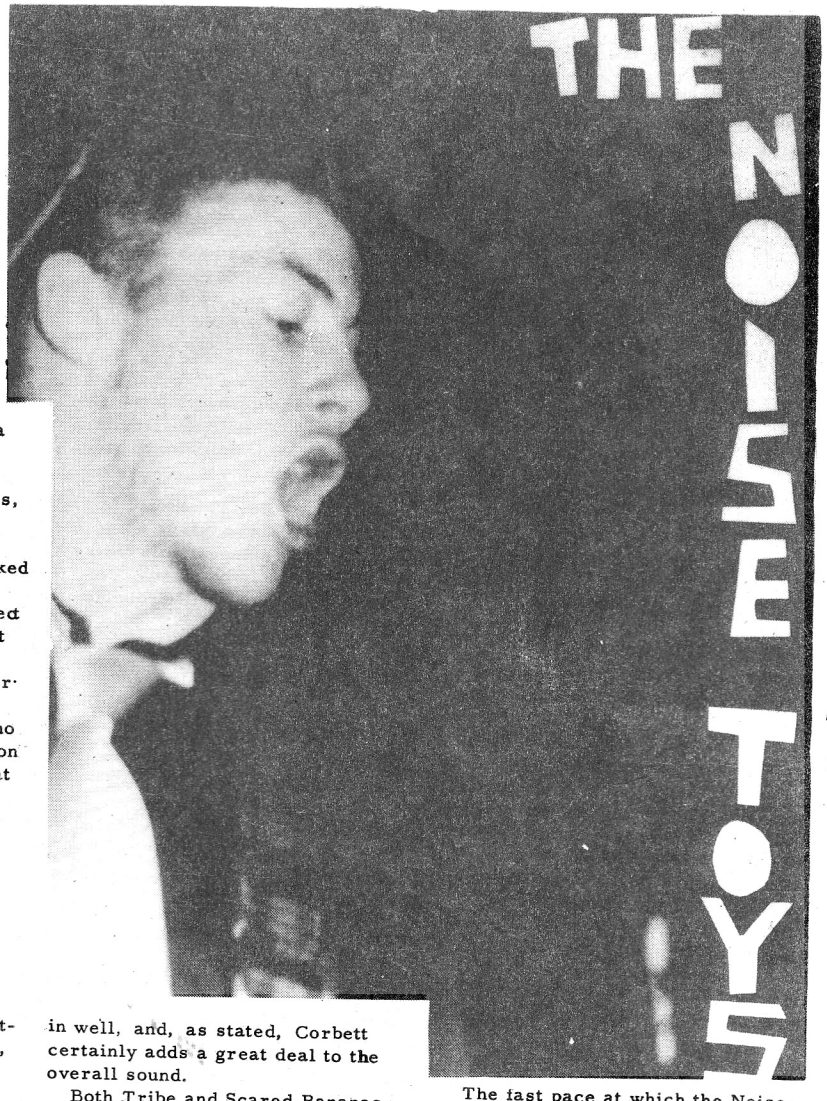


The Gosforth Hotel is hardly a likely showcase for bands involved with Arthur 2-stroke's Anti-Pop set up but, nevertheless, it is - and a very successful one too!

To begin our feature, we checked out a typical Monday night there just to get an idea of what to expect when we later interviewed Rupert of the Noise Toys.

Three bands were due to appear: Tribe, Gateshead's Scared Bananas, and the Noise Toys, who had recently returned from London where they had played one night at the Music Machine with Wavis O' Shave.

First up were Scared Bananas, an unusual three-piece outfit consisting of a lead vocalist, guitarist, and a guy controlling various taped sounds/music. A rhythm machine provided a backdrop for the band's sound.

The guitar work was rough and raw but, suprisingly, complemented the rather good chanted vocals, which were delivered from a crouching position to enable the singer to read the long list of lyrics to each song.

All kinds of weird and wonderfull noises were included on tape - mainly recordings of TV programmes - some of which fitted in well with the guitar patterns, but others too inaudible to be of any great effect.

Stand-out songs included the anti-police "Violence In Gangs", and the strongest number of the evening, a clever satire called "Tourist".

Tribe are a four-piece whose lead vocalist, Steve Corbett, was making his debut appearance on the night in question, and a fine job he made of it too. In fact Tribe are a very tight band with a well-matched rhythm section which features heavy drumming and throbbing bass lines. The guitar playing isn't flash, but fits in well, and, as stated, Corbett certainly adds a great deal to the overall sound.

Both Tribe and Scared Bananas would appear to have been influenced by PiL, although their music isn't overwhelmed by this influence, the sound being both original and interesting.

Watch out for both these bands in the near future.

After nipping downstairs for a pint, I came back to find the Noise Toys beginning their set with "Pocket Money", the B-side of Arthur 2-stroke's recent, much-recommended "The Wundersea World Of Jaques Cousteau" single. Playing with the Noise Toys on this particular occasion was Rockette Storm on sax, who guests with them every now and then but isn't a permanent member at the present time, although this would, I think, be a positive advantage as his playing certainly adds a useful depth to the sound.

The fast pace at which the Noise Toys kick off their set is maintained throughout, with Rupert's individual guitar work roaming free on top of a very steady rhythm section. The sax playing complemented the guitar sound perfectly, providing plenty of interest in every song. Martin, the lead vocalist seemed to put every ounce of energy into his performance, whipping up the atmosphere as he went along and climaxing with an hilarious version of the old Roger Miller hit, "King Of The Road".

It is impossible to compare the Noise Toys with any other band, although it is hard to imagine them developing without the influence of the rest of the new-wave.

Their style and technique could make them one of the most popular and prductive bands in the North-East: we must wait and see.

The original idea behind this feature was to present an in-depth look at Anti-Pop - the Newcastle based record label which also handles publishing, management and promotion for those acts signed to it. An interview was arranged with Arthur 2-stroke, the man responsible for the formation and organisation, and without whom there simply would be no Anti-Pop.

Unfortunately, when we arrived at Anti-Pop's office in Newcastle's Bigg Market, we were informed that Arthur was unable to keep the appointment but that Rupert - guitarist with the noise Toys - would be agreeable to be interviewed in his absence.

So, with the wonderful sound of Radio 1 drifting in from the adjoining hairdressing salon, and surrounded by posters and promotional material advertising the label's acts, we settled down to the interview.

Rupert is one of the mainstays of the label's set-up, having met Arthur when the Noise Toys played a RAR gig at the Bridge Hotel in January '79, two months after the band was first formed. He comes across as a friendly enough bloke who is totally committed to the idea of Anti-Pop.

I began the interview by asking about the reception the band had received at their recent gig at the Music Machine in London.

Rupert: "Quite good, considering. When we came up there were about 300 there; when Wavis it went up to about 500, but most of the kids just stay in the pubs until the main band comes on at about 11pm.

Support acts are ten-a-penny; most of the kids aren't interested."

Helter Skelter: Did you get a chance to look at what's happening in London?

Rupert: "No, we just went down on the Thursday and came back on the Friday, although we did get a chance to talk to a few people. I don't like London - it's like an incestuous cess-pit. Everybody's scrabbling after this, that and the other... there's nothing good there. Anything good that is going to happen is going to come from the provinces. Like Coventry and Two-Tone, who took London to the cleaners.

As soon as the Two-Tone debacle dies down, the next big thing will be Anti-Pop. We want to be as big as Two-Tone, if not bigger; we want a deal with a big company, like Polydor - who are more than vaguely interested."

HS: Do you think you can go on financing your own records?

Rupert: "Yeah we can do, but obviously Two-Tone have set a great precedent with their Chrysalis deal, and we'd like to do a similar thing 'cos big companies have got all the contacts and backing."

HS: If the chance arose for one of the bands to sign individually with a major company, would that band leave Anti-Pop?

Rupert: "It depends... we want to get the whole label signed, but if the major isn't interested in taking the whole label, only one specific band, then that band will probably sign individually."

HS: Will Anti-Pop continue to be based in Newcastle?

Rupert: "Yeah. It's like I said, London is dead. Like Newcastle is really ignored by the music business... all we need is some journalists with some good contacts to get stuck in."

HS: Do the Noise Toys have any plans to release anything in the near future?

Rupert: "Yeah: we're going to put out a double A-side single, with "Second Hand Raincoat" on one side and "Rescue Me" on the B-side, although that's not definite yet."

HS: Are you going to record it on four-track, as you did with your last single?

Rupert: "No, we're going for a more sophisticated 16-track set-up this time, with an engineer and a producer. We want the record to go in the charts."

HS: Were you in any other bands before the Noise Toys?

Rupert: "No, none of us could play. We all learned to play together, the four of us. We don't like musicians, we don't like all these groups in Newcastle who pose around like Junco Partners, Hot Snax - the list is endless, y'know. They all have this big trip that they're musicians, that they're technically perfect and they play 'nice' music. But they forget that the most important thing is magnetism - or factor 'X' as I call it - which involves personality, the lot...

HS: How would you describe your music?

Rupert: "I can't. Me and the drummer were listening to a tape the other day and there's just no way it can be catergorised - it's just Noise Toys music. Like, there's a bit of this and a bit of that, but it's all been oddly mixed in that it doesn't come across as anything, y'know, it comes across as Noise Toys music. It's very personalised, which is a good thing, and with none of us being able to play, we just developed our own style."

HS: You got together and formed a band before you could play?

Rupert:"Yeah, there was me, and I found the bass player and I said 'Can you play the bass?' and he said 'No', so I said 'Fair enough, you're in the group'. So I borrowed a bass for him and a little practice amp, and we drank a bottle of vodka and then just sort of hammered away. Then we found our singer, Martin, and Brian came over from Cumbria and it went from there. It was just like an act of faith, an act of belief that we could get up there and do it, blow away all those so-called musicians. I despise musicians."

HS: Do you think that you would have done all that if there had been no new-wave?

Rupert:"Well, I've wanted to form a band since I was sixteen. It was just a question of the right opportunity coming along. When punk came along, I just thought 'Well, get stuck in', and that's exactly what I did. Yeah, the new-wave was our initial push. Punk was just that, basically, anybody could get up and do it; but after that, the question of whether it's good or bad comes into it and a lot of them happen to be very bad, they just go out and copy their favourite groups. We havn't copied anybody and we couldn't copy anybody even if we tried."

HS: What about the wild version of "King Of The Road"?

Rupert:"Ah...that was just a bit of amusement. We used to round off the set with feedback and smashing everything up, but that was so original it was too much! When you come and watch us it should be some sort of emotional experience: start at the beginning, become involved and work your way through - it's meant to stimulate emotion. You're not meant to sit there and go 'Oh, that's a nice bit of guitar' or 'How technically wonderful!'. Y'know it's like that article in the NME I read, about rockabilly, and the guys who were being interviewed described there state of mind as being 'gone'; y'know just get totally into it and forget your preconceived notions about how you should behave, play or act in public. Which is how it should be, but often isn't because people are very contrived; they get up and deliberately try to contrive an image, contrive the music, and it just doesn't work."

HS: If you do get signed up by a major company...

Rupert:"You sound doubtful. We'll get signed up this year, and then in about three years we'll have a gold disc, maybe even platinum..."

HS: Yeah, well, if you did get a gold disc, do you think that YOU'D start becoming contrived?

Rupert:"It's difficult to say. Obviously were gonna try and not become contrived but you can actually become contrived without knowing it. You can con yourself - your worst enemy is yourself.

HS: Do you have any plans to do some gigs in Newcastle in the near future?

Rupert:" Yeah, we're opening a new venue down on the quayside. We've got a gig in April with Swell Maps and The Raincoats, and we're getting The Slits and Spizz Energi up. It's going to be an'80's version of the Whisky-a-Go-Go, and it's going to fulfill a popular need. There will be no age limit because there won't be any alcahol licence - anyway, if anybody wants to drink, there are loads of pubs around the place...

Which makes for an interesting point on which to finish. The commitment of the people behind Anti-Pop is impressive, even if it is sad to see petty jealousies and rivalries existing between local bands and labels.

However, the new venue at the quyside promises much and, as Rupert says, it may well become THE venue to play in Newcastle in days to come.

STEVE RENWICK + MICK SHELDON.

LOOKING BACK

NICK LOWE / BRINSLEY SCHWARTZ

– BEFORE THE SOUND OF BREAKING GLASS

In these monthly features, we hope to take a look back at the careers of certain artists who, we think, deserve more public attention than they have received.

Often, the artists featured will have received a degree of critical acclaim, but their works have never really made a significant impact in terms of record sales, for one reason or another.

It will purely be a personal option as to which artists are featured, but I hope to draw attention to certain records which have been sadly neglected by the majority of the (un)interested public. A lot of these records may have now been deleted, but efforts will be made to give information as to what is still available.

You may think that to start with an article on Nick Lowe is'nt exactly in keeping with tne general idea of these features, but I hope to examine his career before his more recent success, focusing on the period when he was with the much underrated Brinsley Schwartz.

The Brinsley's recording career spanned the years 1970-74, a period when the U.K. rock scene was at its most appalling. It must be remembered that bands such as Slade, Gary Glitter and Mud were the commercial successes of the day, and that little in the way of progressive music ever made the charts.

The first Brinsley Schwartz album, simply entitled, 'Brinsley Schwartz', appeared in 1970, although it may have been recorded in late '69. The line-up of the group was Brinsley Schwartz (himself) on guitar and vocals, Nick Lowe on bass, acoustic guitar, slide guitar and lead vocals, Bob Andrews on keyboards, and Billy Rankin on drums. The album was produced by the band and Dave Robinson.

Side one opens with "Hymn To Me", and from the onset vocal influences from Crosby, Stills and Nash - whose first LP was released shortly before this one - can be detected. The track was a group composition and is a beautiful start to the album, very much a country sound, giving clear indication of the band's leaning towards American musical styles.

The other three tracks on this side are all Nick Lowe compositions firstly "Shine On Brightly," which features fine vocal harmonies, fast acoustic guitar and some superb percussion from Rankin. In "Rock and Roll Women (and Super-Straight Men)," Lowe gives an account of life as a rock singer and all the so-called 'hang-ups' concerned with that life-style. "Lady Constantly" closes side one, highlighting Bob Andrews' excellent piano work.

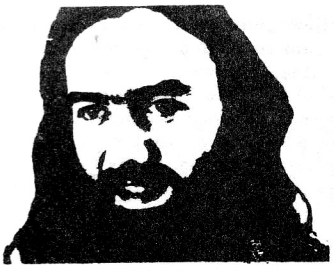
Three tracks are present on side two, all Lowe compositions, starting with "What Do You Suggest" which develops into a heavy rock number, and features Brinsley Schwartz' rapidly developing guitar style. The influences here are surely from The Band, particularly in the vocal and organ style.

"Mayfly" is pleasant enough but it's the last track, "Ballad Of A Has-Been Beauty Queen", which gives us a first real indication of Lowe's potential as a songwriter. A particularly well constructed track, it tells the story of an ageing beauty-queen who can no longer live the life-style she was once used to. The tension in the song is finely held by the band, building up to a classic rock finish.

Listening to the second side of this album, you could be mistaken into thinking that the Brinsleys would soon develop into a heavy rock band, but thoughts of this happening were soon dispelled with the release of "Despite It All," again in 1970, which was even more of a country album than the first.

The band line-up remained unchanged, but additional credits go to Dave Jackson (ex-Van Der Graff) on sax, Willy Weider (ex-Family) on fiddle, and the superb B.J. Cole on pedal steel. Again the album was produced by the band and Dave Robinson, who was acting as their road manager at the time.

"Country Girl", the opener, became probably their best known track, a pure country song featuring some good fiddle by Weider. The song was released as a single and had the dubious honour of being made Tony Blackburn's record of the week, enabling the band to make their first - and last - appearance on Top Of The Pops. (Following this, Lowe vowed he would never go on the programme again.)



It was just before that the infamous Fillmore East hype occured: thinking that they could thrust the band onto the U.S. market, United Artists hired the Fillmore East in New York, chartered a plane to fly the U.K. press to the gig, and sent out special invitations to the U.S. press and critics. As you may know, it all went wrong: most of those invited preffered to go to the record company party than to the gig, and the Brinsleys breakthrough in the States disappeared up its own backside.

But back to "Despite It All", which features seven Lowe tracks including the excellent "Love Song" (which was later included on the 'Glastonbury Fayre' triple album), the unashamedly country "Starship" and "Ebury Down", a quiet acoustic number.

The one track included which wasn't penned by Lowe is Bob Andrews' "Piece Of Home" which, again, reveals heavy influences from The Band.

So by the end of 1970 the Brinsleys had two fine albums in the shops and were set to break into the ever rising album sales market. But their refusal to compromise with the demands of the rock business - only touring when it was their wish and, following the Fillmore East fiasco, never getting involved in any kin of publicity stunts - meant that by the time their third album, "Silver Pistol", was released they had built up a strong following in London and the south, but were still little-known elsewhere, apart from a few fans who had been converted after hearing "Country Girl" on Radio One.

On "Silver Pistol", the first significant transition occurred: the band expanded into a five-piece, Ian Gomm being the addition on guitar, bass and vocals, and also the music featured a much wider range of styles. There were still plenty of country influences on show, but tracks such as "The Last Time I Was Fooled" and "Ju Ju Man" (later recorded by Dave Edmunds) bear a definite rock/pop influence. Also featured is the Brinsleys' first real attempt at a reggae cover with Jim Ford's "Niki Hoeke Speedway".

Two Nick Lowe ballads, "Nightingale" and the enchanting "Egypt" are included, and the album ends with Ian Gomm's tribute to the Shadows, "Rocking Chair".

The addition of Gomm led to a fuller sound, and also meant that some of the weight was lifted from Lowe's songwriting shoulders. "Silver Pistol" was certainly a more commercial effort than the previous albums and, quite simply, gave us a taste of what was to come.

'72 saw the release of their fourth album, "Nervous On The Road", which was their first album to be recorded at Rockfield Studios in Wales.

The band's musical re-direction was almost complete, with hardly a country track present, Ian Gomm's "It's Been So Long" being the only example of that style. Instead, the music is varied, with many different influences from various forms and styles. "Happy Doing What We're Doing" by Lowe is a typical Brinsleys pop song, with lyrics that suggest that Lowe puts his music before fame, a pledge the band stuck to for the whole of their career.

"Surrender To The Rhythm" is one of my all-time favourite tracks by the band, full of beat and style.

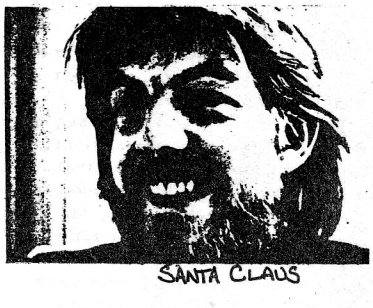
It's the sort of song that should have been riding high in the single's chart as opposed to the bubble-gum music of Messrs. Chin/Chapman, which was so successful during the first half of the seventies.

Another superb Nick Lowe ballad, "Don't Lose Your Grip On Love", is taken at a slow and lazy pace and contains some of his finest lyrics, whereas the title track is a full-blooded boogie, giving perfect indication of the variation in styles to be foun on this album.

The boogie feel remains on side two's opener, "I Feel A Little Funky some fine piano work from Bob Andrews being the highlight, plus some stunning blues guitar from Brinsley himself.

Two cover versions are included firstly Chris Kenner's "I Like It Like That", a jerky song with fine vocals by what sounds like the whole of the band, and "Home In My Hand", a raunchy rocker which became a favourite live number.

The album closes with Lowe's "Why, Why, Why" which takes its influence from early sixties beat music.



"Nervous On The Road", because it contains so many of their most popular numbers, is considered by many to be the Brinsleys definitive album.

The band's efforts to reach a wider audience were enhanced when, at Paul McCartney's request, they supported Wings on their 1972 U.K. tour, and by the time their fifth album was released their audience was at its largest.

"Please Don't Ever Change" was pure undiluted pop, even Ian Gomm's one composition falls in that category. The main bulk of the writing was again done by Lowe, although four cover versions are included: the title track is a Goffin/King number, and another track, "Hypocrite" is an early Bob Marley song.

Brinsley Schwartz also made his debut playing sax on this album, an instrument he was later to perfect.

The album was, in the main, recorded at Jackson Studios, Rickanworth, although two tracks were again recorded at Rockfield. Its also the first album not to feature any production contribution from Dave Robinson - who had left with the idea of forming Stiff - and Vic Maile was brought in to co-produce with the band.

All Lowe's songs on the album bear similar compositional style and feel to his present day work i.e. much more commercial that previous efforts. During an interview conducted at the time, Lowe admitted that he would love to write a song which won the Eurovision song contest, saying that was where real recognition lay. Whether he was serious or not, who knows, but his songs at this time certainly had enough commercial appeal to be hit material.

As a live band, the Brinsleys were deeply involved in the London pub-rock scene, a scene which was largely responsible for starting a whole new movement in British rock music; people were getting out and seeing decent live music instead of listening to the commercial crap being forced into them on television and radio.

I was fortunate enough to see the Brinsleys live on two ocassions, the first time at a free festival in a Sunderland park, thesecond on their last tour, supporting Al Stewart at Newcastle City Hall. Both events drew very small audiences, therefore it was very hard for the band to create any kind of atmosphere.

It was following the release of their sixth and final album, "New Favourites Of Brinsley Schwartz", when I saw them at Sunderland, and they were excellent. A stunning version of the Clay/Bell classic "Private Number" was the highlight of their set, the biggest pity being that they never actually recorded it and only about 300 people, if that, saw them perform it on that day. Certainly, they had one of the best live sounds I've ever heard, particularly when you think that they were playing in the wide open spaces of a park.

The Al Stewart concert was a bit farcical since the hall was about one-quarter full of Al Stewart fans, none of them much interested in the Brinsleys, but the excellence of the band still managed to shine through, although by this time the decision to call it a day had probably been taken.

The "New Favourites.." album proved to be a major step in Lowe's career, bringing together for the first time himself and Dave Edmunds, who produced and engineered the album at Rockfield Studios. Lowe had long been an admirer of Edmunds, and using him as producer was something of a masterstroke.

The songs include are easily the strongest of any of their albums and Brinsley Schwartz' sax had developed into one of the most significant features of the band's overall sound.

Lowe's ("What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love and Understanding", which was released as a single, opens side one and features some excellent guitar work, Phil Spector-ish drum sound and a very catchy hook-line. The song was later covered by Elvis Costello on the U.S. version of "Armed Forces".

Lowe had by now perfected his songwriting technique, his love songs on "New Favourites.." being particularly outstanding. "Ever Since You've Been Gone" is a classic example of this, a beautiful slow ballad, full of romance, and featuring some stunning sax and backing vocals.

The band's country roots re-appear on side two with a cover of the Byrds' "Now's The Time", but thoughts of a return to that style are dispelled with the next track, "Small Town, Big City", an up-beat swinger with Brinsley's sax again taking the starring role.

"Trying To Live My Life Without You", a Gomm/Lowe composition, shows the real direction the band's music was going -pure pop- and there's nothing wrong with that when it's done as well as this.

Eugene Williams' "I Like You, I Don't Love You", and the Schwartz/Lowe song "Down In The Dive"are both soul tributes featuring some beautifully heavy sax. The latter track is an excellent satire of the London Night-Club scene and, at the same time, a real arse-mover.

Needless to say, the Brinsley's sixth superb album was yet another commercial flop, in fact the nearest the band ever got to a chart album was their contribution on the 'Greasy Truckers' live album, which also featured Man and Hawkwind amongst others. Lowe later said it brought them more recognition than any of their own albums.

Sadly it wasn't enough, and the years of obscurity had taken their toll, so following the Al Stewart tour they declared publicly that they were to split up, but not before playing a farewell gig in London which was ironically watched by just about every important figure in the U.K. rock industry.

Fortunately, this story has a happy ending (not all of these articles will have) and Nick Lowe's career blossomed following the split. He remained a close friend of Dave Edmunds and together they teamed up with Billy Bremner and Terry Williams (ex-Man) to form Rockpile. He also went on to become one of this country's top producers, working with Elvis Costello, the Damned, Graham Parker and the Pretenders amongst others. He has also made two solo albums, and

has at last made his mark on the single's chart with 'Breaking Glass' and 'Cruel To Be Kind'. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of all is that nearly ten years after the Fillmore East fiasco, he has made it into the lucrative U.S. charts with 'Cruel To Be Kind' and the 'Labour Of Lust' album.

Of the other members of the band, Brinsley Schwartz and Bob Andrews went onto greater things with The Rumour, and Ian Gomm recorded a solo album which contained 'Hold On', a top twenty single in the States. Billy Rankin does mainly session work these days.

Although all the Brinsley albums I've mentioned are either deleted or extremely difficult to obtain, there is one album of Brinsley music which is readily available, an excellent compilation album called "Fifteen Thoughts Of Brinsley Schwartz" on EMI.

Brinsley Schwartz were one of the best rock groups that this country has ever produced, and to think that their music may never be appreciated by a wide audience is very sad. That is why I certainly don't begrudge a single penny or dime which Nick Lowe is now earning, because his dues were paid a long, long time ago.

Mick Sheldon.

Footnote: In an effort to make this article as comprehensive as possible, we wrote to U.A. for information, photo's of the band, etc, and didn't even get a reply.

No wonder the band never got anywhere with P.R. like that from the record company

BRINSLEY SCHWARZ

BRINSLEY SCHWARTZ ALBUM RELEASES

	RECORD No.
1970 - 1st ALBUM	UAS 29111 (UNITED ARTISTS)
1970 - DESPITE IT ALL	LBG 83427 (LIBERTY RECORDS)
1971 - SILVER PISTOL	UAS 29217 (UNITED ARTISTS)
1972 - NERVOUS ON THE ROAD	UAS 29374 (UNITED ARTISTS)
1973 - PLEASE DON'T EVER CHANGE	UAS 29489 (UNITED ARTISTS)
1974 - NEW FAVOURITES OF	UAS 29641 (UNITED ARTISTS)

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GROUP MEMBERS AFTER THE SPLIT.

BILLY RANKIN

JOINED A BAND CALLED TIGER SHORTLY AFTER THE BRINSLEYS SPLIT BUT DIDN'T LAST LONG. MAINLY DOES SESSION WORK. TOURED LAST YEAR WITH THE SUTHERLAND BROS. HE ALSO PLAYED ON ROCKPILES 'GET IT' ALBUM

IAN GOMM

DID NOTHING UNTIL '78 WHEN HE RECORDED AN EXCELLENT SOLO ALBUM 'SUMMER HOLIDAY' FROM, WHICH A SINGLE 'HOLD ON' WAS RELEASED AND BECAME A HIT IN AMERICA ENTERING THE TOP 20. IAN ALSO HAS A NEW SOLO ALBUM COMING OUT SHORTLY

NICK LOWE

PERSUDE THREE INDIVIDUAL CAREERS

BRINSLEY SCHWARTZ

BRINSLEY AND BOB TEAMED UP WITH GRAHAM PARKER TO FORM GRAHAM PARKER & THE RUMOUR, FULL BAND LINE UP IS :-
GRAHAM PARKER - LEAD VOCALS, GUITARS,
BRINSLEY SCHWARTZ - GUITARS, VOCALS,
BOB ANDREWS - ORGAN, PIANO, VOCALS.
MARTIN BELMONT (CREDITED ON SILVER PISTOL) - GUITARS, VOCALS.
ANDREW BODNAR - BASS.
STEPHEN GOULDING - DRUMS & VOCALS.
THE BAND HAVE NOW RELEASED 5 L.P's:-
HEAT TREATMENT, HOWLIN' WIND, STICK TO ME, PARKERILLA, AND SQUEEZING OUT SPARKS. ALL GREAT STUFF ALSO A BEST OF ALBUM IS AVAILABLE.
THE RUMOUR HAVE RELEASE A SOLO ALBUM AND BOB ANDREWS WAS ALSO CREDITED ON ROCKPILES 'GET IT' ALBUM.

BOB ANDREWS

MEMBER OF DAVE EDMUNDS' ROCKPILE

NICK HAS WORKED ON 3 ROCKPILE ALBUMS:- GET IT, TRAX ON WAX AND REPEAT WHEN NECESSARY. THE BAND HAS HAD 4 HIT SINGLES (IN THIS COUNTRY) I KNEW THE BRIDE (WHEN SHE USED TO ROCK & ROLL), GIRLS TALK, QUEEN OF HEARTS, AND SINGIN' THE BLUES. THE BAND LINE UP IS :-
DAVE EDMUNDS - GUITARS, VOCALS.
NICK LOWE - BASS, VOCALS
BILLY BRENNAR - GUITAR, VOCALS,
TERRY WILLIAMS - DRUMS.

RECORD PRODUCER

NICK PRODUCED ALL 4 ELVIS COSTELLO ALBUMS - MY AIM IS TRUE, THIS YEARS MODEL, ARMED FORCES & GET HAPPY. ALSO ALL COSTELLO'S SINGLES. HE ALSO PRODUCED GRAHAM PARKERS FIRST 3 ALBUMS :- HEAT TREATMENT, HOWLIN' WIND, & STICK TO ME. ALSO THE PRETENDERS 1st SINGLE - STOP YOURE SOBBING (NOTE - ROBERT JOHN LANGE CO-PRODUCED HEAT TREATMENT WITH NICK)

SOLO RECORDING ARTIST

HAS RELEASED 2 SOLO ALBUMS :- JESUS OF COOL AND LABOUR OF LUST, FROM WHICH CAME 2 HIT SINGLES (IN THIS COUNTRY) 'I LOVE THE SOUND OF BREAKING GLASS' & 'CRUEL TO BE KIND' THE LATTER ALSO ENTERED THE AMERICA TOP 20 SINGLE CHART & 'LABOUR OF LUST' WAS IN THEIR TOP 30 ALBUM CHARTS.
BOB ANDREWS PLAYED ON 'JESUS OF COOL' & ALL ROCKPILE PLAYED ON 'LABOUR OF LUST'.
NICK ALSO WROTE THE LYRICS TO DR. FEELGOODS HIT SINGLE 'MILK & ALCOHOL'.
2 TRACKS BY NICK WHERE ALSO INCLUDED ON THE 'LIVE STIFFS' ALBUM.

HOT SNAX

(on sale now in the foyer..?)

Hot Snax are an up-and-coming local band based in Low Fell, whose Beaconsfield Public house - a typical North East pub, with the usual facade of imitation stonework and simulated velvet seats - was the venue for a conversation I had with them recently.

The interview began with the absence of the band's keyboard player, the elusive Paul Newman, who eventually arrived just as the tape recorder was being switched off.

The band have just aquired the adept talents of Jimmy Bullock, ex Deep Freeze/Sharkskin Suits, to replace their old drummer who left recently for personal reasons. Steve Foley, the band's mainman, assured me that Hot Snax would be back on the road in the very near future and that they have decided to steer clear of residencies such as the Cooperage as they feel that type of gig tends to stunt musical growth and also stops musicians from reaching a wider audience. It was mentioned that the North East seems to be a dead-end for musicians, especially the more ambitious and talented who have a lot more in mind than the clubs/small venues/dance halls where the audiences seem to want to drink themselves insane regardless of the music.

Hot Snax have been fighting hard over the past few months to gain more recognition, with Steve Foley and Bassist Marshall Hall recently returning from London, where they had been sniffing around the 'Sounds' office trying to get Phil Sutcliffe to give the band some national coverage.

The band's manager, Brian Burness, is currently discussing a deal with a record company (who shall remain nameless) for national distribution of their soon to be released single. Although no definite tracks have been decided upon, 'Thinking Of You' and 'Love is strong' were suggested as current favourites. They have already had one locally distributed single released in 1978, which was moderately successful, but not all of the band wanted to travel great distances to promote it, this resulting in a split.

Apart from Jimmy Bullock, the band's line-up has been stable for just over a year.

They made it clear that although they would prefer to stay in Newcastle, it seems likely that they will be forced to leave owing to the lack of outlets in the North East. All the members have very set views on their music and seem both optimistic and ambitious. When asked what sort of music they play, the answer was "a good one".

This refusal to label their music is both a healthy and an outward-looking sign, and songs such as 'Thank Heaven', a reggae version of 'Thank Heaven For Little Girls', and 'Thinking Of You', not hot and heavy but top quality rock'n'roll, show us why.

Judging by the demo I received from them, the band have a very distinctive sound, very clear cut and original. If they do make it to London and if they can achieve the same kind of sound on stage, then they will almost certainly have a very promising career ahead of them.

Colin Green

Next month's mag (or whenever it comes out!) features interviews with CHELSEA (remember them)* Lizzy's Phil Lynnot amongst other notables too numerous to mention.

Hopefully, tapes will have flooded in from local bands, so there'll be features on some of them, too.

And, of course, there'll be my glorious editorial column to read.

Isn't it all too much maaaaaannnn!

Mal

SINGLES, SINGLES, SINGLES, and SINGLES,

in which T.H. BOGART drools over the dross and panders his platitudes to pick as his "GOODIE OF THE MONTH"—

'They Came And Took Her'
- The Scars (Charisma)

GREAT! I like this because it's a good old tale of heroism gone wrong. The wonderful "help, the monsters are coming" type riff gives way to the lines "I opened the car door for you/ You shook my hand and ran away/ Through empty streets to hide away/ I knew then that they'd came for you"-the alien, that is!

The singer tells us that he hears a voice, presumably from the aliens, but he and his wife ignore it and re-affirm their love for each other. The aliens burst in and snatch his wife away, leaving the narrator to ponder about trivial issues like how he can save the human race, etc.
This record will not make the charts, and the aliens will have their wicked way. Monster backing great lyric, excellent original record.

'Lie To Me' - Dirty Looks (Stiff)
Another Nail In My Heart -
Squeeze (A&M)
'Yesterday's Love' - Any Trouble
(Stiff)

The business of music for the radio gets serious. These three singles are super dance-beat, super product, super.

Any Trouble s 'Yesterday's Love, I'm sorry to say, must be put firmly in the Jags' school of shuffle-stop, but let's not start arguing about that one, Elvis! The lyrics are of the 'here today - gone tomorrow' kind, which is always going to make it yesterday's love.

'Lie To Me' from Dirty Looks is in the wonderful tradition of the mistreated torch singer. He wants his girl to lie to him, because he's confused and insecure about their relationship; obviously got the situation well in hand. Also it's got the sort of loping beat which will make you jerk your neck back, and forward, but not actually dance to.

Fine songs, nevertheless, and T.O.T.P. appearances from both these bands are the order of the day.

'Another Nail In My Heart' is a hit already, so all I'll say is what a wonderful modern pop song it is, beautifully pasted up into three minutes. It's yet another song about bottled paranoia, which a few years ago would have had them branded as mere hairdressers. This single took weeks to hit the charts even though it's head and shoulders above most most of the other current releases. Still, very nice, but not the stuff rock'n'roll legends are made of.

Red Beans and Rice's 'That Driving Beat' (Chiswick) is a cover of the Willy Mitchell hit of '64. Whacko-whacko, baro-baro, is all that's to be said.

Supercharge's 'Cool Jerk' (Criminal) is yet another cover of The Capitols' original, previous

MANICURED NOISE 1980

versions coming from Parts and Todd Rundgren.

'History lesson's over and you can start dancing to them right away. You'll be able to sham your way through 'Cool Jerk' without expelling too much energy, but 'That Driving Beat' will have you shaking in a frenzy, due to ex-Shantells vocalist Lavern Brown's brilliant exhortations to a certain woman's driving ability. And this group are from Wales?

The Angelic Upstarts' 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place' (Warners), does nothing for the Animals original, which is bad news for the N.E development council. Where the Animals steamed and swayed, the Upstarts puff and stagger. Must near the album, but on this count it's back to the terraces, lads.

"Don't Touch Me There" - Tygers Of Pan Tang (MCA) did well a few months ago when the band put it out independantly. Music for Men and, as usual (check the lyric), Men's Women.

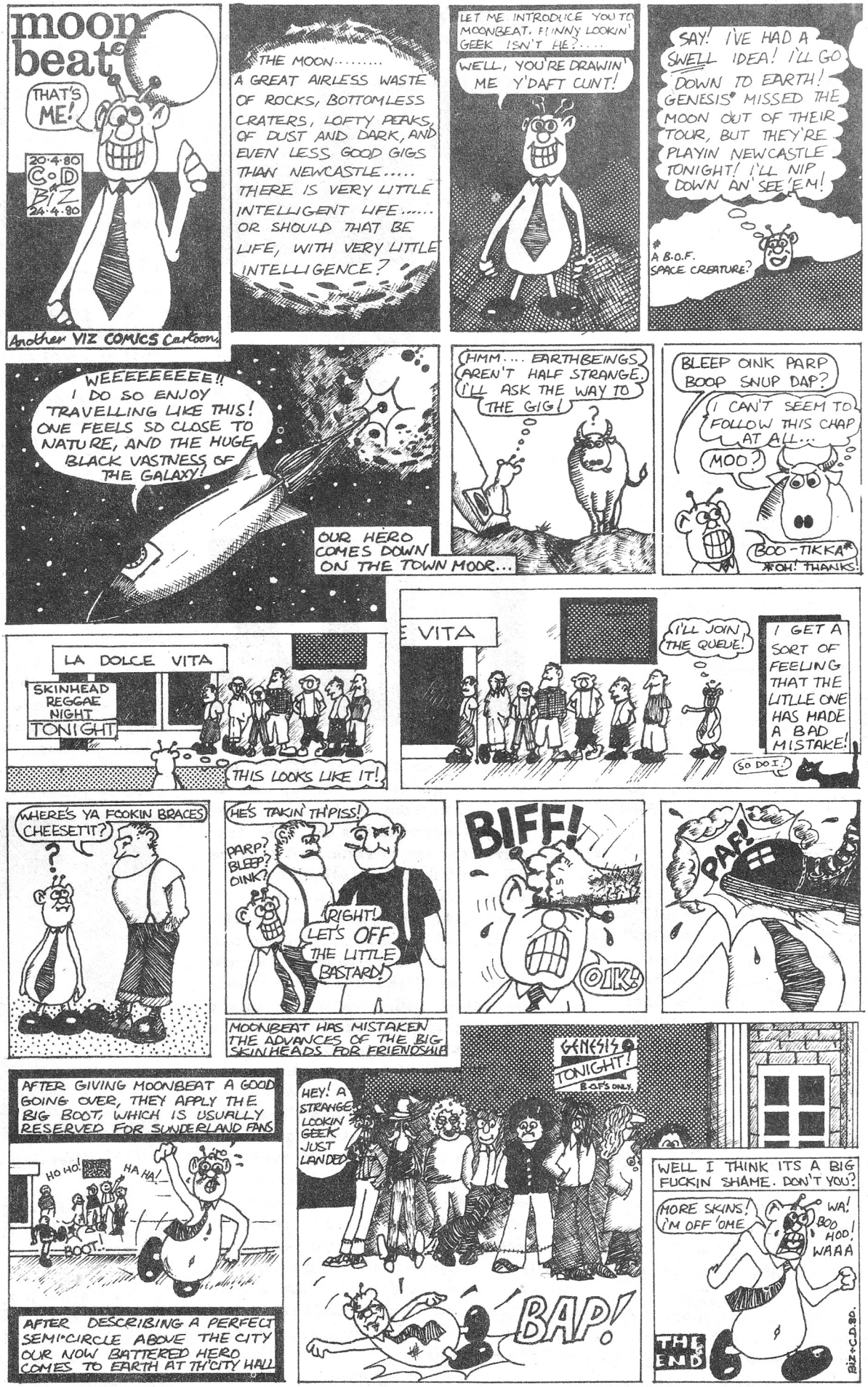
Now that they've got the muscle of MCA behind them, the Tygers must be measured against their peers and, sad to say, the single is not only over-produced, but indecisively over-produced. All of which equals a lumpen, greasy version of a potentially great song by a potentially great band. The most we can hope is that next time- and, after all, this is only their debut disc - the Tygers will have grown up along with their increasing prestige and deliver the sort of smack Van Halen offer.

'Face Down' - Wild Horses
Because Brian Robertson and Jimmy Bain (ex-Lizzy and Rainbow) didn't jump straight back into big record deals when Wild Horses kicked off and settled instead for touring every second-rate club in the land, I was really keen to hear their new single. Unfortunately, folks, I had my flying pig deflated on slapping the platter in question on my turntable, realising that not only have the band came up with a fairly aimless shot at a single release, but they've also written an uncharacteristic pop song at a time when they would probably have had more success with something that had good old meat and two veg in it. As it is, they've dropped into one of those Lizzy-like sequences for the verse, brought up the melodrama for the chorus and ripped through the guitar solo, all with the bright sheen of ace playing.

So why can't new groups come up with something NEW!

Manicured Noise's 'Moscow1980' (Charisma) comes on like a famous Roxy Music track and proceeds to undo itself by attempting a two-tone beat without

CONT'D ON INSIDE BACK COVER OR THEREABOUTS..


moon beat
THAT'S ME!
20·4·80
C·D BIZ
24·4·80
Another VIZ COMICS Cartoon.
THE MOON..... A GREAT AIRLESS WASTE OF ROCKS, BOTTOMLESS CRATERS, LOFTY PEAKS, OF DUST AND DARK, AND EVEN LESS GOOD GIGS THAN NEWCASTLE..... THERE IS VERY LITTLE INTELLIGENT LIFE..... OR SHOULD THAT BE LIFE, WITH VERY LITTLE INTELLIGENCE?
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MOONBEAT. FUNNY LOOKIN' GEEK ISN'T HE?....
WELL, YOU'RE DRAWIN' ME Y'DAFT CUNT!
SAY! I'VE HAD A SWELL IDEA! I'LL GO DOWN TO EARTH! GENESIS* MISSED THE MOON OUT OF THEIR TOUR, BUT THEY'RE PLAYIN NEWCASTLE TONIGHT! I'LL NIP DOWN AN' SEE 'EM!
* A B.O.F. SPACE CREATURE?
WEEEEEEEEE!! I DO SO ENJOY TRAVELLING LIKE THIS! ONE FEELS SO CLOSE TO NATURE, AND THE HUGE BLACK VASTNESS OF THE GALAXY!
OUR HERO COMES DOWN ON THE TOWN MOOR...
HMM.... EARTHBEINGS AREN'T HALF STRANGE. I'LL ASK THE WAY TO THE GIG!
BLEEP OINK PARP BOOP SNUP DAP?
I CAN'T SEEM TO FOLLOW THIS CHAP AT ALL...
MOO?
BOO-TIKKA*
*OH! THANKS!
LA DOLCE VITA
SKINHEAD REGGAE NIGHT TONIGHT
THIS LOOKS LIKE IT!
VITA
I'LL JOIN THE QUEUE!
I GET A SORT OF FEELING THAT THE LITLLE ONE HAS MADE A BAD MISTAKE!
SO DO I.
WHERE'S YA FOOKIN BRACES CHEESETIT?
HE'S TAKIN' TH'PISS!
PARP? BLEEP? OINK?
RIGHT! LET'S OFF THE LITTLE BASTARD!
BIFF!
OIK!
PAF!
MOONBEAT HAS MISTAKEN THE ADVANCES OF THE BIG SKINHEADS FOR FRIENDSHIP
AFTER GIVING MOONBEAT A GOOD GOING OVER, THEY APPLY THE BIG BOOT, WHICH IS USUALLY RESERVED FOR SUNDERLAND FANS
HO HO!
HA HA!
BOOT!
AFTER DESCRIBING A PERFECT SEMI-CIRCLE ABOVE THE CITY OUR NOW BATTERED HERO COMES TO EARTH AT TH'CITY HALL
GENESIS TONIGHT!
B.O.F'S ONLY.
HEY! A STRANGE LOOKIN GEEK JUST LANDED
BAP!
WELL I THINK ITS A BIG FUCKIN SHAME. DON'T YOU?
MORE SKINS! I'M OFF 'OME
WA! BOO HOO! WAAA
THE END
BIZ+C.D.80.

PROJECTING PUNILUX

It's been over a year since the first Punishment Of Luxury album, 'Laughing Academy', was released to a plethora of good reviews, but since that time - and in the last six months in particular things have been strangely quiet on the Punilux front: very few U.K. gigs, little mention in the press, no new recordings...

So what's been happening. I asked guitarist Nevillu ury, drummer Steve Sekrit and road manager Sue.

"At the end of last year," Nev explains, "the A&R guy at the record company left, our manager split - we'd been having a lot of hassles with him - and this delayed us a lot; we couldn't get back on the road straight away for financial reasons.

"So we had to find another manager and we had to be sure that U.A. were going to come up with the money to support us on a tour. So before we could get any music done, there was this huge wad of hassles to contend with.

"But we've gotten through all this by sticking together and believing in the music. The music is so much more important."

When I ask him if his eyes have been opened since the band signed to United Artists, he answers "Opened and poked out!" Although nowhere near disillusioned with the Rock Industry, he certainly sounds bitter:

"Y'know, people try to drive you out of this business if they don't like you. There's a lot of jealousy; lots of people who've got fuck all to do with music, know fuck all about it, are right there at the top."

A lot of his bitterness stems from the fact that that the first album received precious little promotion from the record company when first released and only now, following the release of the title track as a single, have the powers that be at U.A. decided to push Punilux to the forefront, initially with the release of a video.

"United Artists support us, it you know what I mean," claims Nev, "but there's always a lot of opposition to any ideas we may have."

Steve Sekrit's comment that U.A. "put pressure on you all the time to mould you into a hit-single band" has everyone nodding in agreement.

Nev sums up the Punilux/ U.A. relationship:

"It all comes down to making profits If we were a type of bean, a commercially successful type of bean, they'd probably be more interested.

"The whole scene is fucked up, but we've got to saw through it. If U.A. won't promote the music, we'll just get independents in. U.A. try to give the impression that they're PIG, but they're not; they're just people sitting in an office."

But enough talk about the shortcomings of Punilux'record company, let's talk about the music. I throw in a comment that the first album, although flawed, was enjoyable and entertaining, and this leads Nev to begin chatting about some of the political overtones apparent on many of the tracks.

"Those original songs were about very basic, everyday things around us which very few people ever bother to comment on. I mean, you don't have to be a revolutionary communist or anything to see that things have to change pretty drastically; that's why the political overtones of the first album aren't propaganda. Propaganda isn't the way - that's what you get out of the TV every day."

Steve Sekrit agrees: "I don't like the idea of preaching to people. You can maybe just instigate a change, a thought in somebody's head."

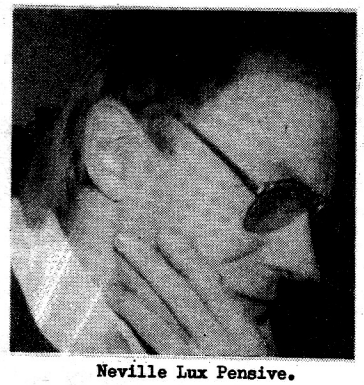
The next album is a long way from completion as yet but the signs are that it will be very different from the first offering and although the band struck up a good working relationship with producer Mike Howlett, there's no guarantee that he'll be at the controls next time.

Sales for that first album were a promising 16,000 in the U.K. and with more promotion the album could have nudged its way into the charts. Even more promising were the sales in Europe where, with even less promotion, the album sold better than anyone expected, 10,000 copies being shifted in Germany alone.

This encouraged the band to tour Europe, an ambition finally realised last month when they embarked on a three-week stint of performances in Holland, Germany and Belgium.

"The first night of the tour was in Belgium - which is a very bland country, a real sad state of affairs and we were supporting Wishbone Ash, believe it or not," laughs Nev. "We all felt as though we should wear beards to go on stage. It was like being stoned in a time-warp. Y'know, 'What year is this, man?' But never, ever, ever again."

All in all, the tour was a big success, but that doesn't mean the band will be deserting the U.K. and concerntrating their efforts overseas, although I'd imagine a potentially huge audience awaits the band in America



Neville Lux Pensive.

"We'd like to go to the States," says Nev, "but there aren't any plans to do so at the minute. We do have some of our records on the radio station playlists over there, and we have appeared on some of the alternative charts but, basically, its all down to the availability of the record: U.A. in the States aren't taking our records, it's as simple as that."

When I mention that the band have something of an unwanted reputation for being 'arty', (whatever that means) Nev gets quite heated.

"We don't mind WHO comes to the gigs, in fact it's always very varied," he asserts. "Punks come to the gigs, 'arty-farty people come to the gigs, lots of different people. The 'arty-farty' people probably get disillusioned and leave.

"When we talk about 'art', y'know there's nothing wrong with art, it's just that the term used for anyone interested in art is 'arty-farty'.

"Some people get lost in the bourgoise cliche of 'Is it Art?' and look for things which simply aren't there."

Yes, I agree, but isn't there a danger of it becoming elitist?

"Elitism's no good in any way, shape or form. Anyway, people like we've mentioned certainly don't come to the gigs these days: in Hamburg it was a bunch of motor-bike ravers, real loonies.

"What I do think we attract is a very aggressive audience a lot of the time"

One of the most interesting aspects of any Punilux performance is the effective use of theatre which occurs during many of the songs. Suprisingly, none of the three members I spoke to had and great feelings on that side of the group's act.

Road manager Sue said that she thought the Punilux visual presentation was interesting, but believed that there was a risk of gigs falling into the trap of becoming a fancy-dress show. Nev agreed that the new set would have plenty of changes in that particular department.

"We've got nothing to lose, really, by changing things. I mean, it's not as if we're going to lose millions of record sales," he laughs. "Theatre bores me, actually. Unless it's Brecht or something like that, y'know, right over the top which will make you think progressively. All this bland theatre which goes around touching on these unimportant, middle-class subjects is shit. Most theatre evokes very little emotion in me."

Apart from the lyrical and dramatic content of Punilux, there is also the highly progressive style of playing by the band to consider. Nev's own unique brand of guitar playing leads me to ask who his influences are and which bands he listens to at the present time.

He doesn't waste a second in giving me the answer:

"Margaret Thatcher! She really fuckin' inspires me!

"I like Talking Heads, their latest album I've listened to quite a bit, some really good things on that. I like Eno. I haven't heard too much of PiL, but I liked them on the Whistle Test. I think some of the things Lydon does are very good. Y'see, he's trying to break his own image."

Constantly...

"But I can respect that because he's probably had to wade through a load of shit from the record company. I respect him because he's trying to do something completely different."

Yeah, unlike say, The UK Subs.

"UK Subs? Pop group I'd reckon. I don't rate them at all. I'm not into slagging other bands because everyones got different reasons for doing whatever it is they do. There are loads of people who HATE us, for instance, and, in a way, I think that's really healthy."

Other musicians Nev admires include Zappa, Todd Rundgren and Robert Fripp: "Some of "Lark's Tongues In Aspic" is heavier than any of the punk stuff which came out much later. King Crimson were a band with very few limitations."

Our conversation is drawing to a close, so to round off I ask Nev the obvious question about Punilux' plans for the future.

"You can either exist without the system, or with the system, or you can smash the fuckin' system to pieces. We want a situation where we can smash it to pieces. Things MUST change. There are situations where things could change quicker than we could make them, like revolutions, but we're all a part of what's going on, all subject to threats of different natures and it's no good ignoring it, so fight it.

"A hit single would be easy, yeah, go on Top Of The Pops, pay somebody to put you in the charts; it all depends on how much money you've got available to bribe people.

"Basically, you can't stop good music coming through and we aren't copping out with any fuckin' crappy singles. I mean, what's the point? I saw Top Of The Pops the other night and was disgusted. The music on there was really bad. And I think people know that now.".

Let's hope so, Nev, for all our sakes.

Mal Armstrong!

Robert Fripp: "Under Heavy Manners\ God Save The Queen"

After leaving King Crimson in 1974, Robert Fripp disappeared from the music scene until 1977, when David Bowie coaxed him into playing on "Heroes". Fripp's extraordinary guitar playing on that album re-established his reputation. From there he went on to work with Blondie, Peter Gabriel, and his old friend, Brian Eno.

In 1978 he came up with the idea of a 'Drive To '81' campaign: this consisted of a tour of Europe and North America to promote his "Exposure" album, the first of the 'Drive To '81' trilogy. The tour avoided large venues an concentrated on restaurants, art centres, record shops and other low-profile gigs.

The campaign comes to an end with these two albums; not a double but each side an individual album. (Misleading, eh?)

The "God Save The Queen" side is a journey through 'Frippertronics' a process developed with Eno and others. The technique consists of two Revox tape recorders, on recording the signal from Fripp's guitar and looping it to the other. This, in turn, plays the delayed signal back as Fripp plays the next phase.

The best example of 'Frippertronics is the first track, "Red Two Scorer", which features a slow. rhythmic backing track consisting of a few random notes played over and over again, on top of which Fripp improvises, building layer upon layer of precise notes. His guitar weaves in and out of the basic tape loop, creating a stunning overall effect.

Track two, the title track, is similar. This was born from the '79 tour, when some bright spark in the 'Bear's Lair', Berkeley, suggested he play "Star Spangled Banner" as it was the tenth anniversary of Woodstock. Fripp, being a true blooded Englishman, opted instead for "God Save The Queen". This resulted in him using the first few notes of the anthem on a tape loop and improvising over it, creating yet more layers of guitar, until it's difficult to distinguish one part from another.

After a lengthy pause, "1983" starts off uncertainly, but soon builds as heavy guitar chords break in and out of the mix, whilst high-pitched notes bring the track to a crescendo, resulting in the basic tape loop being lost among the layers of notes. A slow fade out brings the "God Save The Queen" side to an end.

albums albums

Yes Folks! It's the page you love to HATE!

Under the expert scrutiny of our panel we have the latest platters from ROBERT FRIPP, THE FEELIES, MARTHA + THE MUFFINS, THE FAB T-BIRDS and other ace pop celebs!

But remember: the pen is MIGHTIER...

"Under Heavy Manners" is 'discotronics', an amalgamation of 'Frippertronics' and disco, an unlikely marriage but one which works well.

The title track begins with a tape loop recorded at Calgary Planetarium in '79 which soon erupts into a fully-fledged disco beat. Fripp's chords come over crisp and clear, his lead riffing funks along and the rhythm section of Buster Cherry-Jones on bass and Paul Duskin on drums make for an unshakeable sound. This track has the only lyrics on the two albums: a collection of 'isms', 51 in all, all expertly pronounced by Talking Head David Byrne. (Terrorism, Baptism, Marxism, Liberalism, etc. Get the idea?)

The sequence of 'isms' is broken by shouts of 'Urizel, oh, Urizel', 'bells, I can hear bells' and 'Sunder here navy man' (sic). The track grinds to a halt when another voice recites the words 'STOP', the music recommencing when the words 'I am resplendant in divergence' are spoken. This leads into "The Zero Of The Signified", perhaps the most interesting piece on the album. The drums and bass pound out an astounding disco beat while Fripp improvises, carrying on for two- thirds of the twelve minutes the track runs. The whole thing pulsates until the rhythm section fades out, leaving the tape loop and Fripp's imprvisations to taper off the longest fade out I've ever heard.

Fripp is a musician I've admired ever since Crimso's "Court Of The Crimson King" back in the early '70s a man continually trying to break away from the usual format of rock music. His 'Frippertronics' and 'discotronics' are refreshingly different; his use of tape loops (although not a new innovation) and his unique guitar sounds, quite staggering in parts.

The only criticism (not another 'ism' - Ed.) I have is the way the buyer is mislead into thinking he/she is getting something for nothing by the statement that if you buy one album, you get the other free This is not the case as both 'albums' are on the same piece of vinyl.

Nevertheless, I look forward to Fripp's next project, "Decline To '84" and who knows, maybe 'reggaetronics'!

Colin Green

Wreckless Eric : "Big Smash"

'Big Smash' - Wreckless Eric.

I'm not sure as to exactly how many bites of the big cherry you're allowed in rock'n'roll these days, but I'm pretty sure that the Wreck must be dangerously close to his last one.

The veteran stalwart of both the Bunch of Stiffs and the Be Stiff tours, the lad must surely be aware that if this offering doesn't see SOME kind of chart action, that it could be 'cut-the-losses' time.

Fortunately, 'Big Smash' gives him more than a 50-50 chance, and could indeed be the record that puts rock'n'roll's very own Norman Wisdom right there amongst the chart pigeons; or to put it another way, if this one doesn't make it, NOTHING will!

Basically, this latest double album is a definitive collection

of old and new Eric-type chewns. All of the best old material is here- 'Semaphore Signals', 'Reconnez Cherie', 'Take The Cash' plus the immortal 'Whole Wide World' - and there are even a few new 'uns to give them a run for their money in 'Pop Song', 'Broken Doll' and 'Strange Towns'.

In Eric's world, girls are just one big problem: they're either never there when you need 'em (Whole Wide World); or they don't appreciate your finer points ('Can I Be Your Hero?'); or they're a bore ('Good Conversations'); or, inevitably, they let you down ('Veronica'). Not a hell of a lot else seems to bother our man, apart from the times when he doesn't have a woman - and that makes him feel even worse!

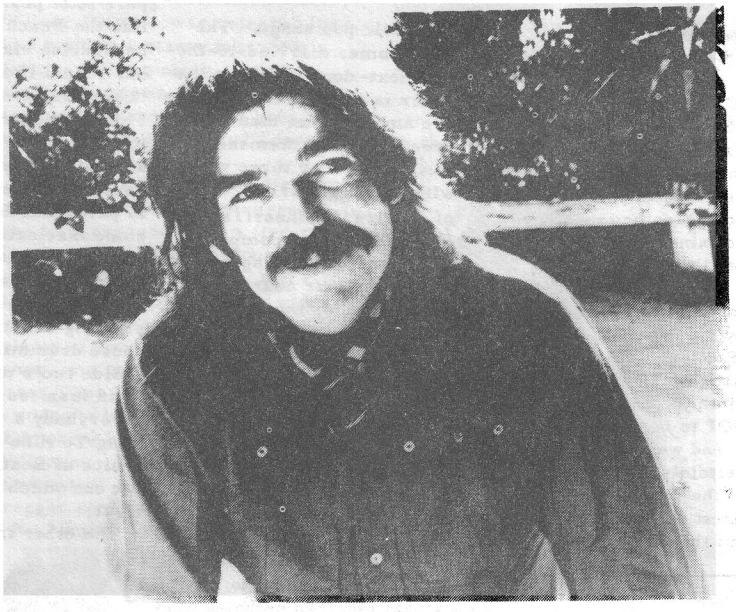
Musically, the newer stuff is professionally played pop-tinged R&B, whereas the older songs are ineptly played pop-tinged R&B, and are all the better for it. The 'don't kick-sand-in-my-face-mate' voice is pathetically superb throughout, as is the unembarrassed provincial pronounciation of the lyrics ('I'd go the whole wide werrlldddd!' and 'We can see a foulm' in "Let's Go To The Pictures" being a couple of examples.)

For anybody who's never been sure what to make of Wreckless Eric, this is the album to buy and make a decision on.

But still the doubts linger concerning how much longer the guy will be on the scene if this album flops. As he himself sings on "Pop Song", "the agency said... if you don't hit the news then you're off our books".

It could be nearer the truth than he'd like to believe.

Malcolm Armstrong.



B. FART finally realises that T.H. Bogart isn't such a bad guy after all!
(Pic courtesy of Virgin rekurds)

B. Fart's Country Mambo

Captain Beefheart & The Magic Band: "Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller)"

When ol' Don Van Vliet first started out in whenever it was, he could well have called himself Captain Lionheart but instead assumed the moniker 'Beefheart': the old western pioneers' spirit.

I was first exposed to Captain Beefheart about ten years ago via ' Lick My Decals Off, Baby' which my older brother had borrowed from somewhere and which could regularly be heard blasting out of the pale green Dansette at home.

Before the day came when some irate youth turned up at our house and claimed that he was the rightful owner of the disc, that particular Beefheart album had become a fave of mine. I'd even went as far as to perfect Don's square-wave, Wolfman Jack voice and could even whistle the guitar bits.

And now we have 'Shiny Beast', a jump-up-and-down happy, slappy, yahoo album, tweaked to the Nth degree without much apparent effort at all.

First track up is the fabulously titled 'The Floppy Boot Stomp', a country story, I swear to God, with the Cap shouting "'n' the hot leg kicked 'n' the fire leaped 'n' licked" half a dozen times in a row, while a dirty, jabbing piano figure, trombone and slide guitar pump away in unison. Where's ma ol' workshirt, Ma!

'Tropical Hot-Dog Night': "Tropical hot-dog night / Like two flamingoes in a fruit fight / Every colour of the day / Whirlin' round at night / I'm playin' this music / So the young girls will come out / To meet the monster tonight."

Who cares if you don't 'understand' it; just soak in the lyrics and rhythm, let them put you amongst the colours and all that green warmth. Yeah, this is the genuine article and yeah, Frank Zappa always had his tongue firmly planted in someone else's cheek!

'Harry Irene' is a four to the bar song, is an everyday story, is a light-weight let-up before 'You Know You're A Man', which comes complete with its own headbanging riff.

Last track on side one is 'Bat Chain Puller', an active, inventive description of a train ride, with great lyrics straight off the Cap's cosmic cracker-barrel:

"Bulbs shoot from its snoot 'n' vanish into darkness / It whistles [illegible] a dry root snatched fr[illegible] earth / Sod bus[illegible] 'n' ra[illegible] with grey dus[illegible]ws Announces it's [illegible]min' in[illegible] mornin'.

Now that may not be neatly political, but sure as eggs is eggs, it makes you FEEL something.

Being a soppy sod, I absolutely love the romantic 'Candle Mambo', the blue-tinged 'Love Lies I've even a soft spot for the Zappa-cloned instrumentals, 'Ice Rose' and 'Suction Prints'.

Yup, this is the Cap's back to land, down-home connection, and I just can't explain how worthwhile this record leaves me feeling. It isn't intended to point out the sick-heart of our times, but a Beefheart back on for

T. H. BOGART.

More Weirdos From The Big Apple

The Feelies
"Crazy Rhythms"

All is not as it seems. These four clean-cut American college kids on the cover surely can't be responsible for the manic squeaking pop music contained on this album, can they?

Mmm... well, there is that strange look in their eyes... and that name, 'Feelies', a bit odd.... Alright, alright, they're much too ordinary looking NOT to be weird.

And weird they most certainly are.

The Feelies are Stiff's latest import from the States and they specialise in paranoschotic pop songs. The wholesome, married-to-the-girl-next-door image on the cover is a sham: these dudes are amongst that bizarre breed who lock themselves away for two or three years with only a guitar and a pile of Beatles/Beefheart/Lou Reed albums for company. They emerge seeking an outlet for their neurotic fantasies and, more often than not, find that outlet by recording an album such as this one: a flawed, minor classic which teeters on the knife-edge of excellence and lunacy.

'The Kid With Perpetual Nervousness' is probably the most representative song on the album: strongly autobiographical, it tells the story of that enigmatic kid who never sweeps the yard or helps Mom with the groceries because he's into 'bigger things'. Exactly what these things are we are never told, but it's safe to assume that they don't include stamp-collecting.

In contrast, 'Fa Ce La' is pure idiot pop, sounding like the Beach Boys on a benzedrine binge, but side one's final two tracks, 'Loveless Love' and Forces At Work', show an intelligence in minimal song structure that is second to none. The latter in particular features some fascinating unorthodox guitar playing before it blazes into a frenzied apocalypse of chord slashing and crazed power house drumming.

Side two's tour-de-force is an inspired reading of 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide', a strange choice of Beatles song, but one which works a treat.

The other track on the second side worth singling out is the eerie 'Moscow Nights', which starts off a little too much like Talking Heads for comfort but ends up as one of the strongest songs on the album.

Quite simply, The Feelies are one of the most interesting bands I've heard in ages, and deserve to be heard by as wide an audience as possible before anybody writes them off as just another bunch of Yankee nutters. 'Crazy Rhythms' is their first statement, and is immensely enjoyable, infuriating, inspiring and confusing all at once.

Do yourself a favour and give them a listen.

MAL ARMSTRONG.

Martha & The Muffins
"Metro Music"

By now you should all have been jiving to Martha and The Muffins hit single, "Echo Beach", and realised what a fine offering it is. Let it be said straight away that there isn't another track on the album of the same potential, but then again, the album would have to be something of a classic to keep that standard up.

The signs are there at last that the U.S. and Canada are beginning to realise what new wave was/is all about.

Martha and The Muffins are a six-piece Canadian band who operate mainly in this country and therefore have a greater insight into what has been happening here over the past few years. Certainly, a lot of new wave influences are evident on 'Metro Music'.

Side one opens with the previously mentioned "Echo Beach" which sounds even better in album form, the Mark Knopfler style guitar, solid beat, tasty organ, well structured vocals and stirring sax making it destined to become one of my favourite singles of the year.

Most of the tracks presented are in a similar vein, but unfortunately their melodies are nowhere near as strong, which is a pity since musically the band are very strong. Carl Finkle is a very fluent guitarist indeed, concentrating mainly on intricate guitar patterns which mould around the organ/sax sound.

Andy Haas's adds a very important quality to the Muffins music, filling in with excellent solos and introducing variations that are very rarely seen in current U.S. bands. The keyboards are used mainly as a foundation for the rest of the band to build upon; the end result is a full, tight sound which is let down on occasions by those mediocre melodies.

Stand-out tracks include "Indecision", which has a fine beat, some involved guitar licks and strong sax work. The vocals are never outstanding, and sometimes appear to be too far back in the mix to be fully effective.

"Hide And Seek" is similarly structured, showing the Muffins at their musical strongest, but it's side two's "Sinking Land" which is the most interesting track on the album. A haunting song which starts with a humming organ sound and builds up with ringing guitar chords and slow vocals from Martha, it is easily the most successful track, particularly vocal wise.

"Revenge" is another good track, and is a good choice as a follow up single, although the chorus is a little disappointing.

So there we have it: a fine first album which shows signs that things haven't gone completely stagnant across the water after all.

The signs are that the Muffins future is very promising indeed.

MICK SHELDON.

'More Intensified Vol 2: Original Ska 1963-67' - Various Artists (Island IRSP3)

Ska was the early '60s creation of a new fusion music previously unheard by most of the popular western (white) culture. This fusion was basically a mix of JA folk music and black '50s R&B which could be bought on import from the American south and occasionally heard in JA when broadcasts from the US reached Jamaican radio sets.

By the time the tracks on this compilation were cut, the music, musicians, singers and stars were clearly defined in a new black music; not a fusion or re-work, but an instantly recognisable dance rhythm.

The album tracks are all listed as being recorded between 1963-67 and are kicked off on side one with The Maytals - under the guise of The Vikings - and their version of "The Six and Seven Books of Moses" which shows what a fine trio they were even then.

Tommy McCook's Skatalites saw their inception in '63 based around several pools of Kingston session players who between them probably play all the instruments on all the tracks on show here. The Skatalites selections on this album cover some of the Ska versions of theme tunes of the day; the rim-shot intros being the origins of most of the modern day reggae drumming techniques.

The Sheiks "Congo War" and "Woman Come" are more JA folk music, especially Marguerita's "Woman Come", which is in such a thick dialect that I'm afraid I just can't understand a word of it.

Don Drummond's "Man In The Street" really shows the '60s jazz influences on the backing musicians of Kingston at that time; the flowing lines and spaces between the phrases are too like those of Coltrane and Miles Davis to be coincidence.

My fave vocal tracks on the album are from The Maytals and also Stranger Cole on "Run Joe". (Stranger Cole's other recordings can be found on an obscurio called 'Tommy McCook' (Attack ATLP 1007).

The '67 Ethiopians hit "Train To Ska-Ville" finishes the album in great style, and if you can't remember how it goes before you hear it, the dunka-dunka guitar riff will remind you as soon as the song kicks out.

'More Intensified Vol 2' is an essential dance/party record with one or two ethnic oddments thrown in for good measure. Use your inflated pound notes to purchase, and get the flavour of the spirit, the power and the naive (and not so naive, note Sir Lord Comic's talkover on the "Great Wuga Wuga" and The Sheiks "Congo War" for references to the independance struggle in JA at the time) dance sounds of the '60s.

And play them loud.

T. H. Bogart.

DENNIS BOVELL :- 'I WAH DUB'

First thing with this album is to play it LOUD. It just doesn't come off when you can't hear it properly.

Blackbeard is Dennis Bovell, producer for a great variety of products and erstwhile member of British reggae band, Matumbi.

This short set of dub instrumentals is Dennis and his friends playing, and Dennis himself at the all-important mixing desk.

"I Wah Dub" contains a few magic passages but, overall, Dennis states his case in the first couple of tracks, "Electrocharge" and "Steadie", after which he re-works and reiterates them until the end of side two.

Also the album lacks -in some ways, thankfully - the heavyweight overtones of many of the ilk, to the point of being SO lightweight, at times, that it borders on becoming Muzak - then again, maybe it's me who's missing the point.

The tunes - even when in the mood - are not message-carrying missiles but merely nice noises carrying similar musical themes, which is o.k. as far as it goes.

Maybe that's all the guy wants anyway, fer Chrissake!

T. H. Bogart.

'ATTENTION: U. S., MEXICO AND CANADA - THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS !'

In the same way that I'm a fool for any kind of cow pedal steel, I just love that kind of American language.

This group are from the Texas school of rock'n'roll mixed with the Chicago school of city blues. Both schools are reputed to be littered with Hard Knocks (people and times). From what I can ascertain, The Fabulous T-Birds are no different. Since surfacing on the last Rockpile tour, they've lived up to their reputation in the press and onstage too.

Rush owe a direct allegiance to Led Zep for everything they do, and Zep, initially, to harp players like Little Walter and guitar players like Muddy Waters. This brings us to The Fab T-Birds: they also have a connection with the Hoochie Coochie Man, only at some point in the proceedings they turned up a dirt road somewhere in Texas, whereas Zep went west to the sea on interstate.

All of the above is to point out the influence of Muddy and his ilk on the wonderful world of rock'n'roll. The Fab T-Birds are the early, earthy R&B group with the sound that Zep lost following the years of success. Rush never possessed it at all: a good example of all that is watery and insipid and inbred in rock today.

From the album cover photos, a couple of these boys look like they've seen a bit of service. Obviously recorded in a couple of days, the tracks have a sly, sweaty feel without having any of the manic overtones normally associated with R&B UK style. All the tracks on the album are either slow or mid-pace, which is a bit misleading, because I know for a fact that this band (i. e. Kim Wilson: vocals and harp, Jimmy Vaughan: guitar, Mike Buck: drums, Keith Ferguson: bass) are a hundred times hotter on stage, so stake yourself a ticket if you get a chance to see them.

T. H. BOGART.

Kim Wilson is credited with the original material various obscure R&B artists with the covers, and it's enough to say that there's plenty mean playing from all involved, especially the thick and dirty guitar riffs.

To finish, this record will fascinate purists, frustrate would-be purists and has a sound like the early Blues-Breakers (Jimmy Page was in that group too!), which is OK with me, Bud.

So why will they never be as big as Rush?

LOCAL COLOUR!

in which Elvis Costello, amongst others, discovers there is life beyond Bradford!
(and maybe wishes he hadn't!)

Elvis Costello & The Attractions
Sunderland Mayfair

In these days when many big-name bands have the brazen arrogance to announce that their only U.K. performances for the next three yeares will be a week-long stint at Earl's Court or, even worse, an appearance at Knebworth, it's refreshing to see someone take the initiative and embark on a tour which is specifically designed to take in areas not usually considered to be a vital part of the U.K. rock circuit.

That someone, in this case, is Elvis Costello and his fab-gear Attractions, and hats-off to them for the gesture; let's hope this is one trend which EVERYBODY follows!

The night begins with over-priced beer, soul records blasting out from the PA, and observations from the balcony of an already densely populated dance floor, where the sychophants are beginning to mill around the front of the stage in anticipation of support band Clive Langer and The Boxes' imminent appearance.

Langer's music, unfortunately, is of the cloned, faceless pop variety; in style, not a million miles from that of Costello, but without the necessary economy, intelligence or panache of the latter's best work.

"Hello, Hello, Hello", could teach the Jags a thing or two, however, and the single, "Splash", sounds worthy so give it a listen if you get the chance.

A rousing version of Amen Corner's "If Paradise.." ended their well-received set, but within minutes Langer and The Boxes are forgotten and it's back to queuing up for the over-priced beer and jiving to the soul records. Such is the lot of a support band on their first major tour.

The interim period between Langer's departure and Costello's arrival is , for some unknown reason, interminably long, and THIS LEADS to a general unrest within the audience: everybody seems to be getting drunk as quickly as possible, arguments break out at the bar queues; an aura of bad vibes begins to prevail...

Then WHAM! Costello and The Attractions are on stage ripping the guts out of "I Stand Accused" and all is well again. The band are as tight as Gene Vincent's leathers, the sound perfect and Mr C. spits out the lyrics with undiluted emotion; the crowd goes ape-shit.

One song, that's all it takes, one song and he's got them eating out of his hand. It doesn't really matter what he does for the next seventy minutes, this audience are quite prepared to applaud his songs, laugh at his jokes and generally prop up the little man's pedestal with their pathetic swooning.

Sickening isn't the word for it.

"On The Beat" follows, the lyrics being changed to 'on F-beat'- the pace, breakneck. Bruce and Pete Thomas handle the tricky rhythms with ease while Elvis gives the evil eye to some spikey-tops who insist on spitting at him. (Save that for the punk revival, eh chaps.)

Already, the band seem to have sussed that they aren't going to have to try particularly hard to win the audience over, and rush through a series of fine songs - 'Red Shoes', 'King Horse', 'Chelsea', 'Secondary Modern' - with little genuine emotion.

'Temptation', with its solid Stax rhythms, is much better, but then we're back to another series of rushed classics, including a pointless version of 'I just Don't Know What To Do' and a hectic 'Pump It Up'.

Into the final straight, and I might as well be at home listening to the records for all that's happening on stage: to be blunt, in the personality projection stakes, Elvis is something of a non-starter. Either he's holding back or maybe it's lack of interest, but for a guy who can write such personal songs, he certainly appears reluctant to express them passionately in public.

'Oliver's Army" and "Can't Stand Up" are, predictably, the encores, one line in the former being changed to "and the boys from the Mersey and the Wear and the Tyne", ensuring that suitable euphoria is induced into the already fanatical audience before they're booted out by the tuxedoed bouncers to catch the last bus home (or, in the case of T.H Pogart and myself, hitch back to Newcastle).

Costello's brand of non-stop, classy dance music may be second to none, but his live show -and that's what rock'n'roll is all about- leaves a hell of a lot to be desired. Maybe things have become too easy for him and he doesn't have to try so hard any more, but, in the end, it's himself he's selling short.

Time, most definitely, will tell.

MAL ARMSTRONG.

Sad Cafe / The Out
Newcastle City Hall

It is difficult most nights for a support band to warm up an audience, and on this occasion The Out's job was made even harder owing to the blizzard blowing outside. They tried, but failed, to reach the audience, mainly due to their own lack of interest and enthusiasm. Their rhythm guitarist did try to inject some energy into the set by jumping, leaping and prancing around, but basically their material was dull and had little, if any lasting effect. They left the stage after 45 mins and, needless to say, no encore was requested of them.

By the time Sad Cafe arrived on stage the hall was beginning to warm, and their fans were ready to be entertained. Two large black curtains were drawn back to reveal a set nowhere near as impressive as the band's P.R. department would have us believe: the only

unusual aspect I could see was the positioning of the drum-kit in the right-hand corner of the stage.

Sad Cafe are a remarkably tight outfit and look extremely professional on stage. Their songs are well composed and expertly reproduced live, but leave little room for improvisation, resulting in every song being played note for sterile note perfect with their records. The only variation from this was "Feel Like Dying", which featured keyboardsman Viv Emmerson alone on stage performing a totally self-indulgent solo. Surrounded by a wall of keyboards, he went through all of the usual channels, his flicking of switches and pressing of buttons making him look more like a computor operator than a muician. Finally, before it became unbearably tedious, the other band members re-appeared, putting a welcome stop to Viv's ego trip.

As per usual, the band played a lot of material from their latest album. Vocalist Paul Young seemed to assume that the audience would be honoured to hear their new material but it took the announcement of their new single, "My, OH My", the last and best number of the set, to finally get the audience going.

Word had it that the band had sold out three nights at the Manchester Apollo (Their home-town), but they certainly don't seem to be as popular farther north if the number of empty seats around the City Hall was anything to go by.

Sad Cafe play solid rock music and, to be fair, play it well. Paul Young and guitarist Ashley Mulford use the full extent of the stage, playing out their roles as rock stars to the full; Young at times sounds very similar to Jagger, especially on the aforementioned "My Oh My". The rest of the band back him up well, their close harmonies being particularly effective.

Although they are an entertaing band, Sad Cafe will never set the world on fire with this style of music.

Colin Green

The Snapshots
Cooperage

April Fool's Day, and by 10.30pm I certainly was acting out the role to the full.

The Snapshots took the floor of the Cooperage at about 11p.m., dressed in box jackets made from some of the most gaudy curtain material I's has EVER see'd, bro'! Immediately, the word 'hairdresser' entered the befeebled mind, as the band proceeded to play what I assume were original songs very proficiently and professionally. In fact many of their songs were well honed and crafted in the style - and they'll rightly hate this- of Costello and his particular ilk.

A few of the crowd who usually give it the frenetic to the Juncos every Wednesday, dance about whilst the rest of us boring bozos stare on, drinking and wondering who the band's tailors are and if the Garment Worker's Union are doing anything about them.

Generally, lyrics seem to be about girls, and the pains and pleasures they inflict on the group which, after all, is pretty much standard fare these days.

I was going to attempt some kind of conversation with the band apres gig, but decided to save them this dubious pleasure because, to be honest, I judged my thinking/speaking mechanisms to be too out of synch to be of any use to four tired, total strangers.

The Snapshots are a good straight pop group who you'll probably admire a lot when you see them- and I'm sure you will soon. Unfortunately, they didn't seem to have any REAL stand-out songs, and seemed too ephemeral for even this type of pop music, which is O.K in the Cooperage, but in the big wide world fellas? Mmmm...

And Oh, those jackets'.'.!

T. H. Bogart

Andrae Crouch & The Disciples
Newcastle City Hall

It was very much a family audience who'd come along to hear Andrae Crouch and The Disciples perform their repertoire of Gospel music, with 7 and 8 year olds tagging along behind their parents and grandparents. Tickets for the concert had only been available through a religious organisation called SCOPE, and religion was the prime reason for most people attending the concert, a concert which allowed those present to behave as if they were in a church in the heart of the Mississippi Delta instead of Tyneside.

The support act was ex-Santana member Leon Patillo, playing keyboards and delivering a set of funky gospel songs. When not singing he told the audience of how he came to embrace Christianity, or rather how Christianity came to embrace him! He was brought back for an encore.

And then Andrae Crouch appeared with The Disciples, a predominantly white eight piece band, together with five black backing vocalists, and the stage was set for an incredible hour and a half of gospel music.

Naturally enough, the music and lyrics were all centred around religious themes, as did the between song raps with the audience, some of which sounded a bit too slick to ring true to these ears.

The music itself was beyond criticism, with the band effortlessly switching from the hypnotic, near reggae rhythm of "Alright, All Night, Tonight", to the '30s style parody of "Dreamin'", with its gorgeous combination of piano, flute and violin.

Most of the lead vocals were handled by Andrae but at one stage in the proceedings he moved aside to let one of the backing vocalists to step forward, a lady by the name of Crystal, who gave a captivating rendition of "God's Love Will Lift You".

The show ended with "Jesus Is My Friend", a heavy, funky number with Dave Mansfield claiming the honours with his slide guitar work.

Next time Andrea Crouch and The Disciples are in town try to catch them, even if you have only the vaguest interest in black gospel music, but be warned - you may end up converted!

Steve Renwick

Well Kids, that's just about it for our first issue!

Once again I'll make an appeal to all local bands to get their fingers out and contact us so that we can check you out.

Our advertising rates for local bands announcing gigs, record releases or looking for some new personnel is a measly £1 for three BIG lines.

Full page ads. are a paltry £17.50, half-pages a wimpy £11, and ¼ pages a puffy £7. (and we <u>really</u> need advertisers!)

Keep your eyes open for issue no. 2 which should be available before the Beatles reform.

Keep taking the tablets

(THE GHOST OF) Mal Amstrong

the swing. An instrumental, this, and I wish somebody would tell me why these sort of groups always feature these rotten three-note sax players who can't really play at all. The B-side is better, but not THAT much better.

The Slits are beyond criticism, which is the way it should be with original artists. "In The Beginning There Was Rhythm" (Rough Trade) features six minutes of Ari Upp screaming in the way that only a woman can scream. As some jazz star (Count or Duke or somebody) was asked once, "What is rhythm?" The reply was that "If you don't know it, then you ain't got it!" Nuff said. The B-side features the Pop Group at the disco. Both just don't sing to me.

One group of lassies who ARE singing at the moment are The Bodysnatchers. "Let's Do Rock-Steady", already in the charts as you read, was tipped by myself to be a hit after I saw them perform it at the Mayfair. Clever, ain't I? After seeing them, my mate Heather immediately vowed that she would be off to the second-hand shop next day to buy a saxophone and start a group. Which is exactly how refreshing they seemed to me as well. That swinging Two-Tone sound is well to the fore, and will probably prove more influential than The Slits, which might mean that the Aliens will be beaten off after all.

The Aliens may be beaten but they keep sending us singles marked 'Germany'. Deutsch-Amerikanische-Freundschaft's "Gewalt" (Rough Trade) is OK in a deluded, denuded sort of way. Not my cup of Angora jumpers though, Billy.

The Echo Valley Boys' "Wash Machine Boogie" (Roller Coaster) has been in the rock'n'roll alternative charts for years, and I understand a fella named Bill Browning put this number together enough years ago to have died on us since. Real man's guitar playing the sort of stuff Gary Cooper would be playing if he was in a group, and that nasal hound dog harmony just sends me. A world-brightener for us

SINGLES EXTRA!

And Finally....

This article is basically about the need for more gig venues in Newcastle. I myself missed out on the boom years, or that is what people a little bit older than myself call them, when clubs like the 'Go-Go' were all the rage. They were, by all accounts, places where young people of the time could pay their money, listen to a band, be able to dance themselves silly, AND have a drink as well.

There are very few places left in the area where you can do that now. There are places like the Mayfair, where the beer is expensive and not very good, and the bouncers put the fear of God into people before the night even gets underway, or the City Hall where you're asking for trouble if you try to leave your seat and get up and dance.

If you don't have a Student's Union card then you might as well try to rob the Bank of England as try to gain entry into the Polytechnic or University. Even if you buy a ticket for the Poly, you have to undergo the embarrassment of asking someone to sign you in.

Unless you dress up as a film star, forget the nightclubs.

So please, somebody, somewhere invest some money in a club for bands in Newcastle. A fortune is just waiting to be made! PAULINE S.

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